

This progress is reversible. A lot rests on whether the President listens to his generals in the coming weeks and months or whether he bows to liberal interest groups and his campaign rhetoric and initiates a premature retreat. But this is an important sign of what our soldiers and the Iraqi people have worked so hard to achieve. Again, in 2 years since the surge began, and now that it has been over for 6 months, we have seen a constant decrease in violence, increased capabilities by the Iraqi government and military, and now an election where the Iraqi people largely chose moderate parties over extremist ones.

Unfortunately, the media devoted little attention to the success of these peaceful elections, just as they have neglected many of the noble efforts of our men and women in uniform. I recently received an email from a constituent whose brother-in-law is currently serving in the 10th Combat Support Hospital at Ibn Sina Hospital, Baghdad. In the building that used to provide health care to Saddam's family and the Baathist elite, these servicemen and women provide some of the best care in the country to all types of patients, from Iraqi children burned by household kerosene lamps to American soldiers with traumatic injuries. Their hard work and the self-sacrifice of all who serve in Iraq has contributed to the dramatic progress made in Iraq.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

COMMUNITY ORIENTING POLICING SERVICES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise to join Senator MIKULSKI, the chairwoman of the Commerce, Justice, and Science, CJS, Appropriations Subcommittee, and Senator KLOBUCHAR in a colloquy about the importance of the Community Orienting Policing Services, COPS, grant program. I would first like to thank my friend from Maryland for her tireless work and leadership on this bill. I know Senator KLOBUCHAR and I and many others are very thankful that the Appropriations Committee included funding for the COPS Universal Hiring Program in this bill.

It is important now more than ever that we support our State and local law enforcement agencies that are on the front lines in combating crime. With unemployment on the rise and tax revenues plummeting, the conditions are ripe for crime rates to climb again. States and municipalities are being forced to slash their budgets, including critical funding for police, who will need to cut their already depleted ranks even further without help. As crime escalates, there will be fewer officers and resources to protect our families and communities, unless we act now.

Providing timely funding for the COPS Hiring Program will not only help to address vital crime prevention needs but will also have an immediate

and positive impact on the economy by allowing State and local police forces to quickly fill vacancies and hire new officers and staff. In police hiring, nearly 100 percent of the money goes directly to job creation. These are good, middle-class jobs for middle-class people, and they can be filled immediately. These are often jobs for people who live in the hardest hit communities and will spend their money close to home.

Eliminating the 25-percent non-federal match requirement, as the House bill does, will ensure that funds get to State and local law enforcement fast, meaning that law enforcement officers can be hired fast, without putting a new burden on states and localities that are already strapped during this time of financial distress. The match requirement could cause strained States and localities to decline COPS funding they would otherwise take, meaning fewer jobs would be created.

In its first hearing of the new Congress, the Senate Judiciary Committee received testimony from police chiefs and former Justice Department officials who explained that helping our local police during this economic downturn is needed now more than ever to keep America safe and keep our economy moving. Waiving the non-federal match requirement in the economic recovery and reinvestment package will further ensure that police forces will be able to quickly refill their ranks and get more cops on the beat.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Senator from Vermont working with me to restore funding for this important program. We have worked together in the fight to turn back the cuts made by the previous administration to Federal resources that assist State and local communities in fighting violent crime. I know all too well the importance of the COPS Hiring Program and share your concerns about the effect of the economic downturn on our neighborhoods. We need to make sure those on the blue line have a full team to combat increased crime in communities. My subcommittee recognizes that need, which is why we put \$3.5 billion total for State and local law enforcement activities. This includes \$1 billion for COPS hiring grants, for which we waived the salary cap for hiring or rehiring career law enforcement officers and civilian public safety personnel.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI and the Senator from Vermont. As we work toward economic recovery, ensuring the safety of America's communities is a critical component to economic stability and growth. Local governments across the country are facing extraordinary budget shortfalls necessitating cutbacks in services, programs, and personnel. I have heard from police in my State how drastically the substantial decline in Federal funding for State and local law enforcement has affected them. The fi-

nancial situation in our country is dire and requires us to do everything we can to help our struggling police forces so they can protect our neighborhoods and communities.

Apart from the program's benefit to community safety, the COPS Hiring Program has obvious and important economic value. All of the funding goes directly to pay the salaries of officers hired to work in police departments across the country. Moreover, many neighborhoods in inner cities and rural towns throughout America that were once crime-ridden and depressed have flourished in the nineties and in this decade, creating businesses, increasing value, and powering local economies. Maintaining a strong community police presence can allow us to protect these economic gains.

With the rising unemployment rate and the foreseeable increase in crime, we cannot afford the continuing depletion of the ranks of our State and local law enforcement officers, nor can we ask them to operate without the resources needed to do the job effectively. Waiving the match requirement, as the House has done, will ensure that all States and localities will be able to afford and accept the COPS funding which is so badly needed.

No city or State has been spared from this recession. I know the chairwoman and the Senator from Vermont understand the importance of ensuring the COPS funding is as accessible as possible and have witnessed the need in their own States as well.

Ms. MIKULSKI. The Senator from Minnesota is right that this is an issue in Maryland, as well as nationwide. As the economic recovery package moves to conference, we will work to ensure mechanisms are in place for this critical program to be quickly and effectively implemented and accessible to those in need of assistance.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI and Senator KLOBUCHAR. I am hopeful that as the economic recovery and reinvestment plan moves forward that we may work together to see if this important issue can be addressed in conference.

VICTIMS' COMPENSATION AND ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Mr. President, I wish to join Senator MIKULSKI, the chairwoman of the Commerce, Justice, and Science, CJS, Appropriations Subcommittee, in a colloquy about the importance of including additional funding to States for victims' compensation and assistance in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. I would first like to thank my friend from Maryland, who has worked so hard for the success of this bill. I commend her for fighting to include and maintain vital funding to support some of the most vulnerable Americans today, who need our help.

During the past year, victim service professionals have seen a clear increase in victimization and victim need. The National Crime Victim Helpline has experienced a 25-percent increase in calls,

as job losses and economic stress translate into increased violence in the home and in our communities. The shortage of affordable housing and rising unemployment are causing victims to require longer stays in emergency shelters. The increasing unemployment rate also means victims are less likely to have insurance to cover their crime-related expenses. In addition to significant State and county budget cuts, corporate and individual donations are decreasing. Across the board, victim service providers are strapped for funding.

As the Senate considers extraordinary legislation to address the current economic crisis, I believe it is imperative for the record to reflect the intent behind the provisions included in this legislation. To ensure that there is no doubt about what we intended, I ask my friend from Maryland whether it is her understanding that the funding included for State victims' compensation and assistance programs would be in addition to any funding states receive from their annual Victims of Crime Act, VOCA, Grants in the 2009 and 2010 appropriations bills?

Ms. MIKULSKI. I would say to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, that is what we intend.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the Senator. It is not the Senate's intent to deduct the funding for victims compensation included in the economic recovery package from the grant money they would receive from regular VOCA formula grants. Through this bill, we intend to provide extra funding for compensation programs, to pay more costs for victims' recovery.

Ms. MIKULSKI. That is correct as well. The funding I included in the CJS portion of economic recovery package for crime victim compensation programs will be in addition to their annual VOCA grants, and will not be deducted from their annual VOCA grants.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the chairwoman of the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator MIKULSKI, for engaging in this colloquy. And I thank her for working with me to include victim services in the economic recovery legislation, which will help ensure that those already victimized by crime are not also victims of our economic crisis.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I commend this body for including provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to energize the fledgling green economy. While I am concerned by the enormous cost of this bill and lack of offsets, I recognize the need for urgent action as we strive to keep and create jobs for those who are suffering because of our failing economy.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Community Revitalization Energy Conservation Act, S. 222, as part of my E4 Initiative aimed at fueling job creation and spurring economic development. I am very pleased that so much of what I proposed in this bill has been included in the economic recovery

package. The economic recovery legislation passed by the Senate includes an increase for the bond limit for the Qualified Energy Conservation Bond program from \$800 million to \$3.2 billion, more than a 300 percent increase. While I proposed increasing the program to \$3.6 billion, I thank the chairman of the Finance Committee for including such a significant increase.

The second component of my Community Revitalization Energy Conservation Act would boost job growth and help businesses and homeowners go green by expanding the types of projects that are eligible for the Qualified Energy Conservation Bond program, which was established by Congress last fall. I am pleased the Senate adopted my amendment making this change as part of the economic recovery package.

Business and labor leaders and others in Wisconsin have told me about the tremendous potential for energy efficiency retrofits to generate more green-collar jobs. And already, Wisconsin communities are beginning to pursue these improvements. My amendment will allow Wisconsin to launch programs—modeled after Milwaukee's proposed Me2 program—throughout the State by utilizing the tax credit bonds allocated to Wisconsin under the Qualified Energy Conservation Bond program.

My amendment specifically ensures that States and local governments can increase the number of building retrofits by eliminating significant financial barriers facing homeowners and businesses interested in making energy efficiency and conservation improvements. It does this by allowing energy efficiency projects to be performed as part of a "green community program" using grants, loans, or other repayment mechanisms, such as periodic fees included on a utility bill or municipal bill. By using utilities as intermediaries, States and localities can ensure homeowners and businesses do not incur upfront costs and can gradually pay back the costs of the energy efficiency retrofits through their electricity or water bills at a rate that reflects energy savings. For example, if a monthly energy bill before energy efficiency improvements is \$150 and with improvements the energy costs are down to \$110, then at most a homeowner or business would pay \$40 monthly towards paying off the costs of the energy efficiency building retrofits.

Presently, buildings account for 40 percent of total U.S. energy consumption and 70 percent of U.S. electricity consumption so there are significant gains to be made with energy efficiency. Projects that could qualify for the funding include heat-saving measures like insulation, electricity-saving measures like lighting and appliances, water-saving measures like low-flow shower heads and toilets, renewable energy generating devices like photovoltaic solar installations, storm water

management like rain barrels, or other measures that also result in reduced energy use.

My amendment will allow Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds to support these partnerships among cities, utilities, homeowners, and businesses to make energy efficiency improvements within more people's reach and put Americans to work.

I thank Senator DEBBIE STABENOW for cosponsoring this amendment, and I appreciate the endorsements from the Air Conditioning Contractors of America, American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, Apollo Alliance, National Electrical Contractors Association, National SAVE Energy Coalition, and the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors-National Association.

I am pleased my provision was included, offering another opportunity to help jumpstart the green economy and bring relief to our citizens as we reinvest in America. I intend to work with conferees to ensure the provision is retained and look forward to its enactment as part of economic recovery legislation.

I am also pleased that funding was included for several other energy programs that I sought funding for including the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program and the Weatherization Assistance Program, both of which can quickly generate jobs and generate lasting energy savings.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in regards to a recent rollcall vote held in the Senate. On February 5, 2009, the Senate voted 32 to 65 on Senate amendment No. 140, which was offered by the junior Senator from Wisconsin. Due to an inadvertent error, I recorded my support for this amendment. I would like to take a few moments to clarify my views regarding this amendment.

As my colleagues know, this amendment would have allowed a point of order to be raised against congressionally directed spending for programs whose authorization has lapsed. This amendment would have hamstrung the Senate in the exercise of its constitutionally delegated "power of the purse." Procedures already exist for Senators to strike provisions of bills they find objectionable, including language in appropriation bills. For example, Members may offer amendments to strike or amend such provisions as they deem appropriate. In addition, as my friend, the senior Senator from Hawaii, has pointed out, this amendment would have exempted funding requests for unauthorized programs included in the President's budget request from this so-called "earmark point of order." In effect, this would have allowed unelected bureaucrats the ability to request funding for programs whose authorization has lapsed while denying elected and accountable members of the Senate from doing likewise.